

## Bill Smiley

Occasionally, I succumb to a great disenchantment with life. At those times I feel that some days are bad, and all the others are better.

Yesterday was one of the better ones. It began at 2 a.m., which I think anyone will agree is a bad time to start a day. I had the Gallipoli disease.

It's called this for two reasons. First, it was rampant among the poor sods trying to capture Gallipoli in World War I, when the Australians lost more men to dysentery than they did to Turks.

Second, it keeps you galloping, back and forth, forth and back, until there's something like a tunnel between your bedroom and your bathroom.

Eventually, you are so weak it's an effort to pick up a Kleenex and have a honk.

Enough to make a bad day, you'd say. Oh, no, it had to be better. That's the way the gods work. When they single you out for a going-over, they're not going to be happy with a mere case of dire rear.

After waiting for months for me to organize some storm window work, my wife had finally got cracking, which she should have done in the first place, and hired two young men to take off and wash and put back the storm windows. Four of them had been removed last spring and sat in the patio all summer, gathering twigs and dead flies. The others had never come off. The windows, that is.

Looking through them was like having a bad case of myopia. You could tell there was light coming through, but everything else was just a sort of blur.

Anyway, she had hired two of the most unlikely window-washers in town, a couple of former students of mine. Personally, though I like the pair, I wouldn't hire them to dig a grave. For a cat.

However, as they weren't on welfare or unemployment insurance at the time, they leaped at the opportunity. After they'd checked on the going rate and agreed it was adequate. Barely.

Not that they were immature or anything. Oh, no. They'd done their Grand Tour of Europe. One had spent six weeks in jail in the Netherlands. They'd had four or five jobs since, in such productive industries as leatherwork and making health food.

Well, they arrive to do the windows the day I am almost on my hands and knees with the Gallipoli. Bright and early. Eleven a.m.

All I want to do is crawl into bed and feel forsaken. No chance. A brisk ringing of the doorbell. "Well, here we are", cheerily. A groan from me.

They had a long ladder borrowed from a long-suffering father. Nothing else. I guess they were going to pry the windows off and wash them with the ladder. My wife mustered cloths and a cleaning fluid. I dug up a hammer and screw-driver, which took me many minutes and many oaths.

They set to work, and I nearly had a nervous breakdown. I covered in the living-room. They're right there at the windows, grinning cheerfully, smearing the dirt around on the panes. They need a step-ladder. Haul it up from the basement with the last possible ounce of strength.

Retreat to the bedroom. There's one of them up there, perched on the ladder, shouting at me to whack the storm windows from the inside. I whack and shudder, waiting, cringing, for the sound of a six-foot storm window shattering into tiny bits. Or the sound of the ladder crashing through the inside window. Or the thud of a body hitting the turf. Wonder whether I have insurance to cover, first, the glass, second, the body. No idea.

This went on for a couple of hours. Shouts, imprecations, poundings. I was in a state of collapse and the old lady wasn't much better. I was wishing I'd gone to school, even on a stretcher.

But I guess the gods, besides tormenting people like me, look after those who need looking after. Neither of them fell, even as much as eight feet. They finished the job. And they were there, very business-like, for the cheque. They also had some terse remarks about the inadequacy of our cleaning materials and we felt properly guilty.

Try it some day when you have the Gallipoli and a couple of nitwits doing your storm windows. A better day.

But it wasn't over. I finally got to bed, whimpering with relief. My wife came in and said she's been talking to our daughter, who has a great rip-off idea. She's going to Cuba, and has a plan. She'll write a couple of columns for me, free. All I have to do is pay her for them. Badiest. However, silver lining department. By staying at home, I had missed a three-and-a-quarter hour staff meeting, which is an abomination on the face of the earth.

So, all in all, maybe not such a bad day, after all.

The average North American automobile weighs close to 4,000 pounds which means most of them cost less than \$1 a pound, notes the Ontario Safety League. When you figure the same car has about 15,000 parts in it assembled by skilled labor, you wonder how the current price of meat can be so high.



GIVE KIDS A SNOWSTORM and a hill and they'll turn them into instant play toys, combination slides and gymnasiums in which, or on, whichever the case may be, to jump, roll, somersault, or just plain have fun. (Photo by J. Jennings)



## Coles' Slaw

A news report from Italy this week announced that the steady disappearance of the 10-lire piece is causing increasing concern. Although the featherweight aluminum coin has an actual value of virtually nothing, it is important to people in Rome who live in apartments with toll elevators.

A toll elevator, if you have never run across one is no joke. You put the 10 lire piece in the slot before the elevator decides whether it will take you up or down, depending on its whim.

It so happens that our foursome visiting Rome stayed at the Pensione Esquilino. It had one of these iron cages that transport you skywards five long storeys courtesy of a 10-lire piece, always hard to find.

No one is quite sure where the coins are going but one theory is that housewives are using them as backing for buttons because they are cheaper than the real thing.

One thing sure—if you have never been on an elevator in Rome which required one of these 10-lire pieces—don't. Our first trip up on one was an experience to remember.

We piled into the cage, shut the door, inserted the 10-lire piece—and waited.

Nothing happened.

The bus boy with us gave the coin box a bash with his fist. The cage shuddered, started up momentarily—and then dropped back into place.

The bus boy gave it another smash. The elevator repeated the performance, like a mule with a stubborn streak. He gave it another smash. Again only a shudder!

Somewhere in the courtyard common to Italian buildings lurked the building superintendent, observing the performance with increasing exasperation.

Finally he could stand no more. He rushed out from behind a pillar to verbally assault the bus boy, who stood as unconcerned as if no one was talking, and kept turning away as if no one else was there.

This had the desired effect.

The super produced a large set of keys. Muttering imprecations to every bus boy in Rome, he opened the coin box, flashed out our 10-lire piece, brandished it in the air and showed us the proper way to insert it in the box so as not to disturb the elevator.

It worked. Away we went for the top floor, where the Pensione Esquilino waited. But somewhere around the fourth or the fifth storey of the building, the cage shuddered to a stop.

Beneath us yawned about 50 or 60 feet of open air with the hard marble floor. (Continued on Page B8)

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## Few passions in light vote

It is obvious from the small turnout Monday that few people cared whether liquor is sold in Acton under dining room or lounge licenses.

Less than 17 per cent of the 3,162 voters turned out to mark ballots, which is a sure indication that the rest of the eligible voters couldn't care less.

Council decided to hold the liquor vote prior to municipal elections for council and board of education to avoid confusion, and to give voters the chance to mull over the issues.

Perhaps 10 or 20 years ago the two questions might have encountered some opposition but those who thought

it worthwhile to register a protest were smothered by better than four to one Monday which clearly indicates times have changed.

We certainly would have liked to see more interest shown in the vote but since old passions have died and liquor laws gradually relaxed, the burning questions of two decades ago no longer carry much heat.

It would be unfortunate indeed however, if the apathy that went with the liquor vote carried over into the vote for council on Monday, December 4.

Eight candidates are running for the

six seats on council in this year's only contest. We think all of them have a special appeal for voters and need your support if they are going to be successful.

Those who were successful in attaining seats by acclamation starting with Mayor Les Duby, new Reeve Garnet (Pat) McKenzie and new Deputy Peter Marks will also be watching results with interest since it could affect programs they have in mind for 1973, which could be one of the most important years in Acton's history, with the possible introduction of regional government and further town development.

## Free Press Editorial Page

B2 The Acton Free Press, Wednesday, November 22, 1972

## Save carols for Christmas

Perhaps it stimulates business and starts people thinking about shopping, but if we could nominate anyone for our hate parade it would be those radio stations and others who play Christmas carols weeks before Christmas.

They destroy much of the beauty of the Christmas season by endless repetition of carols. By the time Christmas has arrived everyone is sick of hearing them blaring from loudspeakers and radios. Scant attention is paid to their message, or their music.

How much better it would be if the carols and music of Christmas were limited to the few days before and the

few days after when people can enjoy them.

Instead, the most cheerful season of the year has carols for several weeks before Christmas and through the big day. Then it is cut off, never to be heard again until the following November, when commercial interests decide it is time.

The practice we think is a rip-off on Christmas, a season when we should have ears tuned to things far above the crass commercialism we are being fed by those anxious to cash in on the Christian Churches' celebration of the birth of Christ.

Christmas-type music—perhaps—but carols we think should be centred around the feast, not the cash register.

It might be good business to sell gifts to the strains of "O Come All Ye Faithful" but to our mind it borders on the sacrilegious as well as being in poor taste.

We have allowed ourselves to be swindled out of part of our heritage by those types who couldn't care less about the real meaning of the Christmas season and don't hesitate to use its unique expression of joy to their own advantage.

## No Pollyanna solutions to violence

The argument over whether violence in movies and the media promotes violence—or merely reflects it—is futile.

Violence is a human condition as predictable as life, death, and taxes. The trick is not to cultivate ground where violence flourishes.

A society which teaches its young to aggressively "kill" the competition shouldn't squawk too loudly about where it finds violence. People who think this is a "dog eat dog" world where people must be pitted against each

other instead of being valued for their own worth—promote violence.

Violence is taught, not only by movies or TV, but by parents too wrapped up in business or personal worries to find time for concern, tenderness and caring. It is taught by those who can't show love; it is taught by people who can't even discipline themselves, let alone guide others.

All these people are helplessly entangled in a system of violence to their own personalities which tells them to deliver or die. They stand to

lose their income, house, car, prestige, their very reason for living.

Violence flows from a way of living which no longer finds dignity in people, but through acquisition and possessions—making slaves of us all.

There are no Pollyanna solutions. It would be nice to begin by repairing relations between English and French Canadians on a large scale or between labor and management.

But people must begin in their own families—giving them the gift of time, care and love. —The Exeter Times-Advocate

## Back Issues of The Free Press

### 75 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, December 2, 1897

The most important business of the Municipal Council was the presentation of a petition of 51 electors praying that steps be taken to establish a public library and the introduction of a bylaw arranging for a vote by the electors upon the question. Payment of an account from Municipal Officer R. D. Graham for feeding traps was paid in the amount of \$2.20.

The bush hunt shooting match at Eden Mills on Thanksgiving Day was quite an exciting event. The sides were captained by Messrs. White and Plummer and each side worked hard to gain the victory. Mr. White's side won with the score of 4,580 to 3,125.

One dollar bills of the new Dominion issue are being raised to five by taking the figures from the revenue stamps used on cigar boxes and pasting them over the figures on the bills. Numbers have been circulated in Winnipeg.

The opening of the final session of the seventh parliament of the Ontario Legislature is generally admitted to have been the most brilliant since Confederation. Never before was there an occasion which has been attended with greater pomp. As well as the Lieutenant Governor Sir Oliver Mowat, the Governor-General and the Countess of Aberdeen also attended. The speech from the throne announced bills would be introduced affecting the election laws; to prevent gambling at fairs; affecting the business of druggists; to prevent the spread of disease among fruit trees; relating to extra-provincial insurance companies; respecting jail and relating to forestry.

The firemen are always alert to save our property; let us show our loyalty to them by our attendance at their concert.

### 50 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, November 30, 1922.

There was a fairly good turnout at the nominations held on Monday at noon. In the evening a meeting was held in the town hall. George Barber has been acclaimed as reeve. Nominated for council are Jeremiah Bell, C. H. Harrison, D. A. Henderson, Frank Holmes, E. T. Thetford. School trustees were acclaimed, E. F. Gamble, George Mann and Neil McDonald, and hydro commissioner is A. T. Brown. On election day on Monday the only vote will be for council.

This getting the municipal election over before Christmas is a fine idea. The first floor of the fine new Leishman block is about completed and those who are to occupy it expect to get moved in today or

tomorrow. The bakery of M. Edwards and Co. will occupy the side next to the New Wonderland Theatre; Harry Mainprize, barber, will occupy the shop on the west side and Mr. Leishman's billiard business will be located in the rear with entrance through the barber shop. There will be two commodious residences on the second floor which will be accommodated by Mr. Leishman and Mr. Mainprize.

Four prominent citizens of Tilsonburg were fined \$20 for raffling turkeys. Skating on Corporation pond commenced on Friday.

A beginners' class has been organized in connection with Acton Citizens Band. They meet for rehearsal every Wednesday evening. There are about half a dozen players.

On Thursday while playing basketball at the public school young Gordon Cooper, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Cooper, fell and fractured his left arm just above the wrist. Jean, the little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Graham, also fractured her wrist when she fell from her high chair.

Jennings, Mrs. Lena Mason, Mrs. Mae Gervais, Mrs. Jean McIsaac.

Dr. Edwin Frank McCullough, who practiced medicine for many years at Everton and Rockwood, died in Guelph at the age of 91.

The annual banquet of Acton Citizens Band was a fine evening of sociability. The banquet was served in the Legion Hall by the Legion Ladies' Auxiliary. The trophy was formally presented to Bandmaster Ferrott and the medals presented to the individual bandmen. Tom Nicol was master of ceremonies and speakers who brought good wishes were G. A. Candler, Mayor Rachlin, Reeve Hargrave, Theron Jones, Charles Mason, J. B. Chalmers, G. A. Dills, Wm. Malticks and Councilor Weick. Miss Dena Braida thanked the ladies. The toast to the bandmaster was proposed by Rudolph Spielvogel.

Knox Evening Auxiliary held an impressive memorial service for their former members Mrs. Grace Kirkness, Mrs. Tena Cole, Miss Marlon McDougall, Mrs. Elmerna Spielvogel and Miss Margaret Garvin.

November gold star winners at the Y.M.C.A. were Fay Andrews and Paul Elliott. October winners were Maureen McCristall and Brian McCristall.

Mr. and Mrs. Bentley Wilson marked their 50th wedding anniversary.

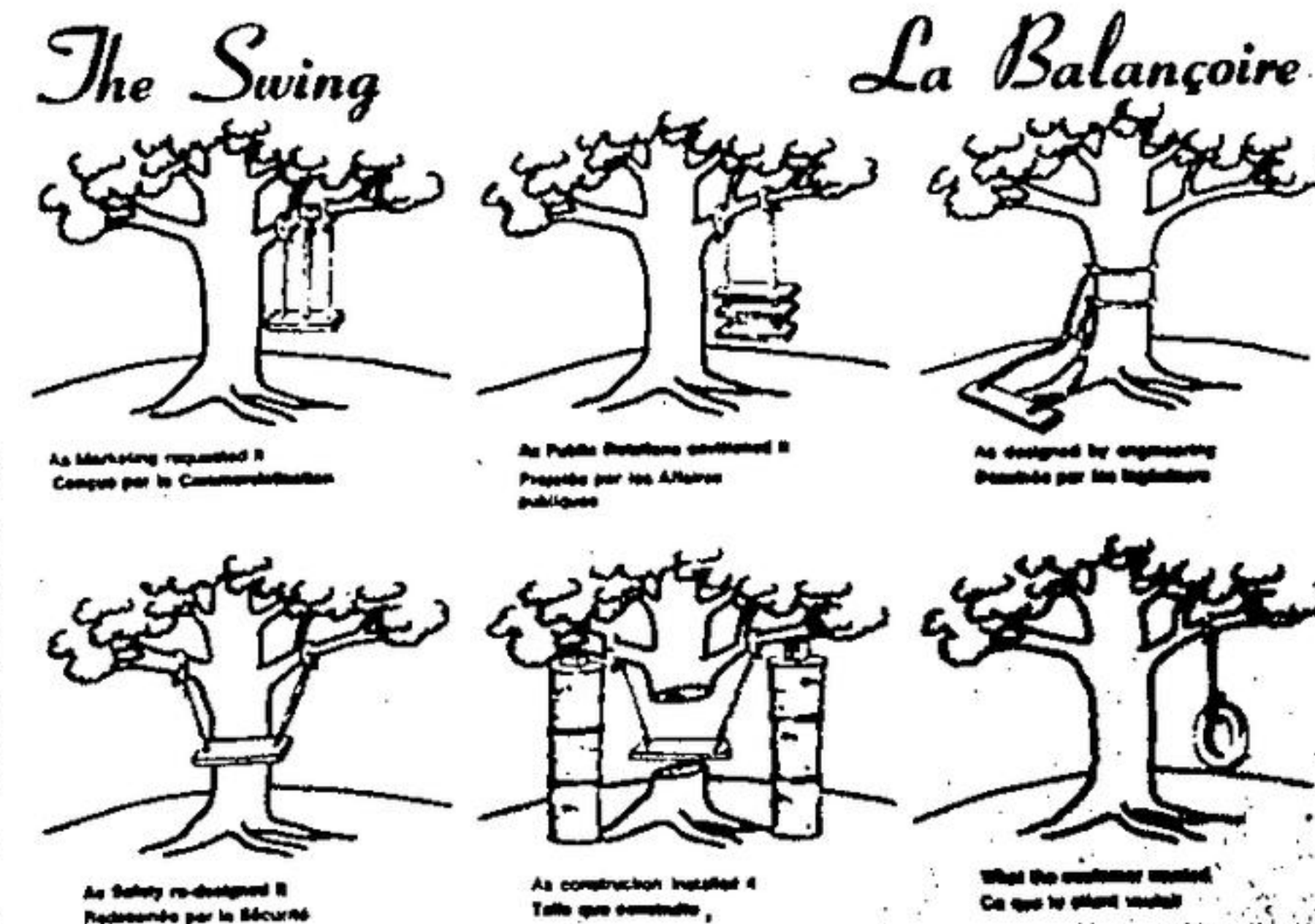
Jean Harris was elected president of the Friendly Circle.

Bob Rumley suffered a broken nose and arm playing hockey in Georgetown.

### 20 years ago

Taken from the issue of the Free Press of Thursday, December 4, 1952.

Scout and Guide Mothers elected new officers for the season, president Mrs. Ethel Stuckey with Mrs. Lij Bradshaw, Mrs. Edith



—From October edition of Communications '72